THE LANGUAGE OF DU BARTAS

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY IN CONFORMITY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

1939

BY

ALVIN EMERSON CREORE

Baltimore

SEATTLE

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DU BARTAS: A REINTERPRETATION

By A. Emerson Creore

Guillaume Du Bartas has recently come to be recognized as a more important figure in literary history than our manuals and histories of literature would suggest. In recent years he has been studied more and more, largely by students of English literature, and has been reëdited by professors Holmes, Lyons, and Linker of the University of North Carolina. But this reawakened interest has been confined for the most part to Du Bartas' ideas, and the prevailing estimates of his language and style remain essentially what they were three hundred years and more ago.[1] From the contemporary Cardinal Du Perron to the present time, Du Bartas' critics have been unanimous in their dispraise of this aspect of his work, and have characterized it as trivial, or bombastic, or in bad taste. But since it is coming increasingly to be realized that Du Bartas' influence was not confined to his ideas, but that his language and style were also influential, it is perhaps time to reconsider these aspects of his work in the light of sixteenth-century practice and of Du Bartas' own literary program, rather than from the point of view of modern esthetics (largely informed, in France at least, by seventeenth-century classical *convenances*) and modern linguistic usage, which have hitherto been the *points de repère* of most of Du Bartas scholarship.[2]

A combination of three elements in Du Bartas makes him seem strange to the modern reader. First of these is the medieval animating spirit—the idea of a commentary and explanation of scripture, which included conceits (i.e., conceptions) like those of the medieval preachers; secondly, the baroque ornamentation; thirdly, the injection of the erudition of the Renaissance. Even if this esthetic barrier to comprehension is passed there still remains the material difficulty, insofar as the purely linguistic elements are concerned, caused by the lack of any thoroughly satisfactory lexicographical apparatus for the sixteenth century. Until there has been a rigorous *dépouillement* of Renaissance texts it will be impossible to state with assurance that any given word is peculiar to or was first used by a given author. The Huguet *Dictionnaire de*

[1] For this criticism cf. Sainte-Beuve, *Tableau de la poésie française*, Paris, 1908, pp. 304-5; R. Morçay, *La Renaissance*, Paris, 1933, II, 59-61; U. T. Holmes, *Life and Works of Du Bartas*, Chapel Hill, 1935, vol. I.

[2] The present paper is a brief presentation of some of the principal conclusions of a longer study.

la langue française au seizième siècle, Paris, 1925-35, is far from complete, even in the words from A to Doigt, the only part which has so far been published. The Bloch-von Wartburg *Dictionnaire étymologique* is also incomplete, and the dates of first recorded appearances of words are not always reliable. Godefroy, and especially the *Complément* to his dictionary, are helpful in finding words from sixteenth-century texts, but neither of these works is complete, and Godefroy usually gives no dates for the obscure manuscript and printed sources which he uses. Since this is the case, the following observations, based on a comparison with the available material,[3] are liable to error to the extent that these materials are incomplete.

I. THE LANGUAGE OF DU BARTAS

A. *Neologisms by "provignement"*

There are a few words in Du Bartas which were probably coined by him. There are others which are attested for the first time in his work (so far as our present knowledge goes) but which may have been used prior to him, and among these there are many whose formation is so similar to other sixteenth-century coinings that they might have occurred to anyone. It is much easier, of course, to show that certain words heretofore ascribed to Du Bartas as neologisms are not original with him at all, than it is to establish a list of certain neologisms.[4] In spite of these difficulties it is possible, however, to show Du Bartas' general tendencies.

[3] O. Bloch, and W. von Wartburg, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue française,* Paris, 1932; Cotgrave, Randall, *French-English Dictionary,* 1650; R. Estienne, *Dictionnaire François-Latin,* Paris, 1549; Hatzfeld et Darmesteter, *Dictionnaire général de la langue française,* Paris, n. d.; E. Huguet, *Dictionnaire de la langue française au seizième siècle,* Paris, 1925-35; A. Humpers, *Etude sur la langue de J. Lemaire de Belges,* Liège, Paris, 1921; C. Marty-Laveaux, *La Pléiade française,* Appendice: *La Langue de la Pléiade,* 1896-8; L. Mellerio, *Lexique de Ronsard,* Paris, 1895; Rabelais, *Œuvres,* edited (with glossary) by C. Marty-Laveaux, Paris, 1890-1902; L. Sainéan, *La Langue de Rabelais,* Paris, 1922-3; Tobler-Lommatzsch, *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch,* Berlin, 1925-39; H. Vaganay, *Le Vocabulaire français du XVI^e siècle: Deux mille adverbes en -ment de Rabelais à Montaigne,* Paris, 1904; *Deux mille mots peu connus,* Halle, 1905; "Pour l'histoire du français moderne," *Romanische Forschungen,* XXXII (1913), 1-184; W. von Wartburg, *Französisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch,* Bonn, 1928-34, fasc. 1-31; B. H. Wind, *Les Mots italiens introduits en France au XVI^e siècle,* Deventer, n. d.

[4] Holmes, *op. cit.,* lists *s'amaisonner, desbondonné, tremblotter,* and *postposer* as neologisms, but they are all to be found earlier than the Du Bartas references (cf. Bloch, Huguet and Marty-Laveaux). Pellissier, *op. cit.,* attributes the adjectives *tourbillonneux, ravageux, moissonneux, enrageux, perleux, glacieux, vendangeux,* and *cedreux* to Du Bartas. But some of these had been used by the Pléiade before Du Bartas (*perleux, cedreux, tourbillonneux*); at least two were in use in the fifteenth century (*enrageux, glacieux*). The form *vendangeuse* in the Du Bartas text may be the feminine of *vendangeur* which is attested in Old French as a substantive, and an example of a substantive used as an adjective, rather than the feminine of a hypothetical adjective *vendangeux. Moissonneux* does appear to be original with Du Bartas.

The great majority of Du Bartas' neologisms are formed by "provignement," that is, by "grafting" a new termination onto an existing root. In this procedure Du Bartas was consistent with the methods used generally by the Pléiade for the enrichment of the language. New verbs which appear in his text are formed from existing verbs or nouns with the addition or substitution of a suffix, and sometimes a prefix. Such, for example, are *desceptrer* from *sceptre, endiamanter,* 'adorn with diamonds,' *s'entrecoudoyer, retisser, sur-maçonner.* Among the prefixes, de-, des-, en-, entre-, and re- are the most common. The suffix -onner is the only one used regularly by Du Bartas in new formations. These are sometimes formed from nouns, like *crayonner* from *crayon* and *glaçonner* from *glaçon,* but there are a few formed from verbs like *flaironner* from *flairer* and *fourmillonner* from *fourmiller.* Most typical of Du Bartas, however, are several verbs formed from nouns and used in a metaphorical sense: *cabrioler* (Bien que le danseur ait . . . cabriolé, *Eden* 287); *escrevisser* (Tu fais des fleuves sourds . . . escrevisser le cours, *Capitaines* 560); *se paonner* (Adam s'habille, habillé se paonne, *Artifices* 137). Du Bartas himself claimed credit for the formation of *limaçonner* and *dédaler.*[5] It is interesting to note that the word *alarmer* is attested for the first time in Du Bartas (Toute alarme m'alarme, *Trophées* 48).[6]

The formation of new nouns and adjectives by the addition of a suffix to an existing root was also a common procedure in the sixteenth century. Du Bartas uses this method to some extent, but rather less than the Pléiade. He has no new formations in -ade except *adelantade* from Sp. *adelantado* which occurs in its Spanish form in Brantôme. On the other hand, there are a number of apparently new combinations with the suffix -eur, like *charmeur, trafiqueur, floteur, presageur.* These adjectives have their feminine forms in -eresse: *assiegeresse, floteresse,* or in -euse: *charmeuses bouches,*[7] *trafiqueuses eaux.* The -eresse termination was usual in Old French for substantives and was used by the Pléiade for both substantives and adjectives, while -euse was rare in the language of the Pléiade.

A few adjectives in -eux seem to be original with Du Bartas: *alarmeux, frimeux, limaceux, palmeux* and others. There are three

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[5] *Avertissment* of 1584 (Holmes I, 222).

[6] Littré dates *alarmer* 17th century. Huguet omits the word. Bloch, the *Dictionnaire général* and the Godefroy *Complément* give D'Aubigné, *Histoire universelle* as their first reference.

[7] Huguet gives examples of this under *charmeux,* but this masculine form does not appear in Du Bartas.

formations with -in: *andrin,*[8] *cedrin, couleuvrin.* Only a relatively few diminutives in Du Bartas appear to be neologisms. These are *enfantillon, fontenille, fraischelet, noirelet.*

The Greek suffix -ide was often used in the sixteenth century to form adjectives taken from place names and personal names, being employed especially to form patronymics. Marty-Laveaux, *op. cit.,* II, 143, lists about twenty-five such adjectives used by the Pléiade. All of these, however, are formed from Greek roots. Du Bartas on the other hand, forms adjectives in -ide from Biblical names, thus putting what was essentially a classical imitation to new uses. Biblical adjectives in -ide used by him are the following: *Abramide, Abrahamide, Amramide, Isacide, Jebuside.* Besides these there are a number of adjectives from classical roots like those of the Pléiade: *Acherontide, Aeolide, Amazonide, Amphitrionide, Atlantide, Castalide,* and so forth.

All in all, among the words formed by provignement only sixty-odd verbs and fifty nouns and adjectives are to be found.[9] Some of these were probably in use before Du Bartas (*e.g., alarmer, surface*),[10] but they are apparently first attested in his work. Many of these words are so similar to other neologisms of the sixteenth century that they might have occurred to anyone. In this kind of word-formation Du Bartas was merely following the tendencies of his time, and the majority of his coinings are no more fantastic than those of his contemporaries.

B. *Neologisms by borrowing from other languages*

Du Bartas' original borrowings from other languages are very few in number. There appear to be none at all from Italian, and only two from Spanish: *adelantade,* already mentioned, and *cacique,* 'chieftain,' from *cacique.* It is equally untrue that the number of provincialisms or latinisms in his work is excessive. Two or three gasconisms, such as *acaser* and *gastadour* are the only provincial-

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[8] *Surgeon andrin* (*P. S.* III, 243). In his note to this line Holmes translates 'dirty black.' It is, however, the adjective from Andros, the most important island of the Cyclades group in the Ægean sea, where in antiquity there was supposed to be a miraculous fountain. Cf. Pliny, ii, 103 (106); also cited by Simon Goulart in his running commentary to the text.

[9] The adverbs, which have a special stylistic use, are discussed below. The number of new noun and verb formations does not seem excessively high when it is realized that the total number of words used by Du Bartas approaches ten thousand.

[10] Bloch and the *Dictionnaire général* date *surface* 1611 (Cotgrave), and the Godefroy *Complément* 1582. But it occurs in Du Bartas, *P. S.* I, 459, and the *Première Semaine* was published in 1578.

isms that are to be found, and these are not neologisms. A few words, mostly of Greek origin, like *anthropopathie,* 'Humane, or man's passion' [Cotgrave] and *melichien,*[11] and which he does not even try to "naturalize" in the text according to the precepts of the Pléiade, do, however, seem to be peculiar to him. The only latinism which appears to be original with Du Bartas is *daedale* (< *daedalus,* 'artful, industrious') in the phrase *la daedale nature* (*Arche* 302).[12] *Daedale, dédale,* 'labyrinth,' first attested in Du Bartas, is the gallicized form of *dedalus* which was common in the sixteenth century (cf. Huguet and Bloch).

C. *Compound adjectives*

The criticism of Du Bartas' use of compound adjectives is even more severe than that of his coinings by provignement and by borrowing from other languages. It is objected that they are too numerous, and indeed 332 compounds formed from a verb and an object, and more than two hundred formed from two adjectives, adverb and noun, or participle and noun, do seem excessive. Furthermore, it is asserted that these compounds are foreign to the spirit of the French language. This criticism, however, does not take into account the stylistic use to which Du Bartas put them. For him they are concise descriptions indicating pictures or ideas suggested by the noun they modify. He defended his use of many compounds on the grounds of economy,[13] but he clearly uses them chiefly to obtain effects by compressing two previously disparate elements into a close union and a new whole. He expresses in this way, as he does through his metaphors, his similes, his periphrases, the essential and fundamental relationships which he sees in all created things. This compressed expression makes the relationship more striking and effective than a phrase would have done.

One authority, at least, does not agree that these compounds are foreign to the spirit of the French language. This is Arsène Darmesteter, who, after discussing their popular (rather than learned) origin, and their use in the spoken language, writes as follows concerning their use in literature:

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[11] From μειλίχιος, 'gracious, propitious,' epithet of Zeus and Dionysus. Du Bartas uses this and other similar terms in a dithyrambic passage in *Schisme,* 487-95.

[12] Cf. *daedala tellus,* Lucretius, 1, 7, 228; 5, 234; Virgil *dedala tecta, Georgics* 4, 179.

[13] "Mon livre eust eté aussi grand que le monde, si je n'eusse trouvé des adresses et sentiers pour parvenir bien tost où je vouloy. Or, qui est celuy qui ne cognoisse bien qu'un epithete composé m'espargne tout un vers, et quelquefois mesme deux?" Holmes, I, 223.

Pour la langue littéraire, elle ne peut accepter les composés qu'autant qu'un long usage les a consacrés. Quant à créer des composés nouveaux, substantifs ou adjectifs, elle s'y refuse. Toutefois, à y bien réfléchir, cette sévérité n'a point sa raison d'être dans le génie même de la langue, et peut-être ne serait-il pas impossible d'introduire dans la poésie les composés français chers à Ronsard et à Du Bartas. En somme, ces mots n'ont en eux-mêmes rien de vulgaire ni de grossier . . . Ils sont si peu contraires au style élevé, que Ronsard et Du Bartas, qui affectaient la haute poésie, en usaient et en abusaient. On les poursuit encore par esprit de tradition classique; ils sont encore sous le coup dont les frappa Malherbe, et de nos jours continuent à expier les témérités de la Pléiade. Proscription imméritée! Aucun obstacle bien sérieux ne s'opposerait à les faire revivre dans la langue littéraire.[14]

The compound adjectives of Du Bartas are used in several different ways. In many cases they have the function of an *epitheton constans* like the "rosy-fingered dawn" of Homer. Such a phrase as "le dieu cuisse-né" for Bacchus, first used by Ronsard, is typical of this. His more original epithets are chosen to represent the function, the characteristics, or the visual aspect of the thing concerned.

Compounds of the "functional" type are the most common, and several are frequently used together. Early in the *Première Semaine* Du Bartas describes fire with a group of these epithets:

> Le feu donne-clarté, porte-chaut, jette-flamme,
> Source de mouvement, chasse-ordure, donne-ame . . .
> (*P. S.* II, 857)

The various epithets in this citation demonstrate the organic nature of the poet's conceptions. The multiple considerations which the idea of fire suggests to him are translated in a manner which shows plainly the flexibility of his linguistic material. This is not an idle listing of epithets, but a creative process, giving evidence of a special conception of nature. Consider, too, a similar description of the earth:

> Je te salue o terre, o terre porte-grains,
> Porte-or, porte-santé, porte-habits, porte-humains,
> Porte-fruits, porte-tours . . .
> (*P. S.* III, 851)

Here, of course, there is no abbreviation at all, for Du Bartas might as easily have written: "o terre qui porte grains, or, santé, habits,

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[14] A. Darmesteter, *Traité de la formation des mots composés dans la langue française comparée aux autres langues romanes et au latin.* Paris, 1875, p. 243-4.

etc." (as did Sylvester in his translation). But to this idea the nouns *grains, or,* and so forth are subordinate manifestations of the fruitfulness which is the main concept of these lines.

A number of compound epithets express characteristics to be found in animals or mythological figures. Such, for instance, are: *le loup aime-carnage, le cheval aime-maistre; l'alge aime-rocher; le chameau trouble-rive; Jupin roule-cieux; Satan charme-coeur.* In certain other phrases the epithet produces a visual image. Thus a high mountain whose peak is in the clouds is called *un mont porte-nuage,* or *Sina baise-nues.* The waxing and waning of the moon are implicit in *Phoebe change-face,* and the brilliance of a comet in *le comete orne-ciel.* The soft, falling snow is seen in *la neige chet-doux.*[15]

The 332 combinations of the verb-object type in the Du Bartas texts are formed from no less than 125 verbs, with, naturally, an even greater variety of objects. But it is interesting to note that more than a third of the compounds are formed with the six verbs *porter, briser, chasser, compter, donner,* and *aimer.* There are sixty-one compounds with *porter* alone. In this Du Bartas was in harmony with the popular development, for most of the combinations in the sixteenth century outside of Du Bartas are likewise with *porter. Porter* and *donner* represent to Du Bartas the idea of fertility and productiveness, while *aimer* indicates a classical influence, that of Greek *philo. Aime-humains,* for instance, is the French equivalent of *philanthropos.* This is quite a striking contrast to Ronsard's forty-four compounds, and to Du Bellay's use of two or three. By far the greater number of them seem to be original creations of Du Bartas; only about sixty appear in the works of his contemporaries.[16]

In common with the Pléiade, Du Bartas uses many compounds formed from nouns and adjectives. A few of these are mere juxtapositions, but others like *bleu-noir, blonde-perse, perse-noire,* denote tones and shades of color to which Du Bartas is keenly sensitive. This keenness of perception is quite evident in such a phrase as "La

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[15] Darmesteter, *op. cit.,* has shown that these compounds are formed from the imperative of the verb plus an object. O. Behagel, *Neuphil. Mitt.* (Helsingfors) 1924, 133, has shown that some German compounds of this type are formed from the 3d. pers. sg. of the indicative. *La neige chet-doux* is an example of this type in Du Bartas, as is *la taupe fuit-jour.*

[16] Marty-Laveaux, *op. cit.,* and H. Vaganay, "Deux mille mots peu connus," *Rev. Et. Rabelaisiennes,* 1904, I, II (also published separately), are helpful in locating compounds in other authors. Vaganay also lists a few from Du Bartas.

lune Fait trembler dans Thetis sa face claire-brune," where to the color of the moon *(brune)* and its attribute *(claire)* is added the shimmering quality of the reflection of the moon in the water *(trembler)*. Phrases of such sensitivity to visual aspects are often lost in the bulk of Du Bartas' verse, but they are there, demonstrating a subtlety of appreciation of detail which has not been adequately pointed out. Even the position of the attribute in the last quotation is significant: the light of the moon is more important than the specification of the color, and the poet writes *claire-brune* rather than *brune-claire*.

There is no doubt that in using compound words of all types Du Bartas was influenced by the existence of such compounds in the ancient languages, and especially by the use to which they had been put by his contemporaries and immediate predecessors. For his own purposes they appealed to him both as reflections of antiquity and as novelties adding luster to his poetic composition. They do give a Baroque richness of description and amplitude of detail which by their very frequence show how consistent and how vital was Du Bartas' conception of the universe. This effort to correlate experiences of different kinds is a highly conscious element of his linguistic program.

D. *Adverbs*[17]

Two general tendencies in Du Bartas' formation of adverbs are to be observed. The first of these is the creation of the adverb from an adjective or a participle in -ant or -ent, without the assimilation of the -nt as is regular for adjectives thus formed. Du Bartas' formations follow the exceptions to this rule, such as *lentement, véhémentement, présentement* in modern French. This was a method peculiar to the sixteenth century, and only the regular type *ardemment, incessamment,* is to be found in the adverbs used by Du Bartas which existed in the language before the sixteenth century. The second of Du Bartas' methods, which was also in wide use in the sixteenth century and before, is the addition of the suffix -ment to a feminine adjective in -euse. With a very few exceptions (e.g., *rougement, persement,* which are modeled on other sixteenth-century formations from adjectives of color) all of Du Bartas' adverbial formations are of these two types.

These adverbial neologisms have a special use in Du Bartas: namely, to modify an adjective and to form with it what is essen-

[17] The adverbs are discussed here rather than with the other neologisms by provignement because of the special stylistic use to which Du Bartas put them, which is akin to the compound epithets discussed above.

tially a new compound. In such a phrase as *la mer baveusement hautaine (Schisme* 198), *baveusement* and *hautaine* express two different things: *baveuse* the appearance of the sea; *hautaine* an abstract quality applied to it. In the same way *odorantement* does not, according to the sense, modify *verte* in the phrase *la terre odorantement verte* (*Magnificence* 723), for the adverb indicates smell and the adjective color. But in the union of such sensory phenomena Du Bartas achieves a new indication of the intimate relationship of things, a restatement of experience, forming new combinations of impressions belonging separately to different senses. In the first citation the visual and moral aspects are joined; in the second, odor becomes colored. In the same way he unites impressions of color and texture (*la chair blanchement tendre, Artifices* 170), or of a moral or esthetic and sensuous nature (*le chant charmeusement doux, Colonnes* 725). In a few instances both the adjective and the adverb indicate color (*les flots persement blancs, Jonas* 40). The primary impression is that of whiteness, but coupled with this there is the impression of blueness. The waves are not white *and* blue, but white with overtones of blue. Du Bartas' expression indicates the simultaneity and interrelation of the two impressions rather than their coëxistence.[18]

It should be noted that in almost all of these combinations either the adjective or the adverb, and often both, appeal to one or more of the five senses. Color and taste, odor and feeling and visual aspect are all represented, indicating that Du Bartas used this method not only to give variety to his style, but also to make his ideas more vivid by basing them on sensory experiences familiar to his readers.

II. STYLISTIC ELEMENTS

The style of Du Bartas has often been described as trivial, bombastic, and in bad taste. It would be foolish to deny that his style is indeed foreign to modern canons of esthetics, or to the *convenances* of French classicism, or even to the elevated style of the sixteenth century as exemplified in the relative sophistication of the poetry of Ronsard and the court poets of Henri III. But comparisons with these standards must be avoided if one wishes to understand the structure, the execution, and the historical significance of

[18] This procedure reminds one of the Baudelairean *correspondances.* Du Bartas, of course, does not have the idea that an impression of one category may symbolize one from another, but in joining the two kinds he demonstrates an awareness of the relationship between them.

Du Bartas' work. It is perhaps not sufficiently realized that Du Bartas was justified in claiming credit for the novelty of his *Semaines* and in demanding the privilege of writing them in his own way. No poem similar in purpose and content in the sixteenth century possesses such magnitude of conception nor such complexity of execution as the *Semaines.* The Pléiade had emphasized the desirability of a French epic which they called *le grand œuvre* or *Encyclopédie,* but no one but Du Bartas had the courage to attempt it.

He conceived his poem not as a mere rhymed encyclopedia or scientific tract, not solely as an epic celebrating real or legendary events, but as an epitome of creation embracing the entire known universe, and including both epic and encyclopedic material. It was to be an immense panorama of the world God had created, a translation into poetic form of the universe as he knew it, in which art, science, history, philosophy, ethics, theology, and satire all were to have a part. He intended to treat, he said, "de la nature de toutes les choses qui sont au monde, afin qu'avecques plus grand ravissement le lecteur apprehendast l'infinie sagesse de l'Ouvrier . . . ."[19]

A. *Metaphors*

The metaphors of Du Bartas correspond to the same underlying ideas as his compound adjectives and adverbial constructions. Through them he indicates again the essential unity of creation. He might have said, like Théophile Gautier, "je suis un homme pour qui le monde extérieur existe," for he shows on every page his interest in the physical world, especially in its visual aspects, but frequently in the auditive aspects as well. He brings together these impressions of different kinds to produce vivid conceptions by "compression" and contrast. This vividness springs partly from the novelty of the associations, which sometimes produces an effect of shock, partly from a certain indifference to prettiness or elevated poetic style. Perhaps this in turn is based on a pantheistic idea: God the creator of all things exists in all things; they are therefore all good, and there can be no question of their relative merit.[20] The

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[19] Holmes edition, I, 220.

[20] In his *Tableau de la poésie française au seizième siècle,* p. 396, Sainte-Beuve quotes and defends the Cardinal Du Perron who referred to the "vilaines et sales métaphores" of Du Bartas. As an example Sainte-Beuve gives part of the description of God contemplating His creation (*P. S.* VII, 63 ff.): "Il œillade tantost les champs passementez . . . Or' son nez à longs traits odore une grand' plaine . . . ." and he comments: "L'oreille, le nez du

idea that some things are inappropriate to poetry never occurred to Du Bartas. For him the most material metaphors may illustrate the most elevated and spiritual concepts as they did in medieval sermons.[21]

Some of Du Bartas' metaphors are consequently so striking that they might properly come under the heading of *concetti.* One example of such exaggeration of metaphor is the description of a horse dying on the field of battle, "Qui d'une encre pourprée Escrit desesperé son mal-heur sur la prée" (*Vocation* 709). Other samples have seemed in bad taste to many critics. One of these is the use of the verb *syringuer* in a phrase where Du Bartas tells how the earth gives back the moisture it has received from the sky: "Syringuant ses humeurs Par les pores secrets des arbres et des fleurs." In another passage Du Bartas pictures God eager to console after he has punished: "Mais tenant quelquefois pour le salut humain, En une main le fleau, l'*emplastre* en l'autre main." And in several passages the poet uses *mastic* as a symbol of unity. Now from our point of view a syringe is not poetic; the image of God with a stick in one hand and a plaster in the other is merely funny; the expression of the unity of the elements through the symbol of putty is trivial. But to Du Bartas these were all ways of stating his ideas vividly and with force, and were not at all prosaic, comical, or trivial.

But by no means all, not even a majority, of Du Bartas' metaphors are so striking as these. A great number are commonplace and traditional. In fact, so traditional have some of them become that Du Bartas forgets that originally and essentially they are comparisons. Because of this one finds a number of passages in which figurative expressions are jumbled together or succeed each other without transition. A good example of this occurs in *Décadence* where Isaiah exhorts Hezekiah to prepare for death:

Tout-puissant n'ont paru bons en aucun temps, qu'on le sache bien. L'œil suffisait à tout rendre, mais l'œillade gâte tout." The critic did not see here that Du Bartas' treatment is in part biblical, in part representative of his tendency to synthesize sensory words to indicate the wholeness of creation and to make his ideas more tangible. Du Bartas might have questioned why God's eye should be acceptable and His nose and ear not, since He is completely holy in all of His parts. Furthermore, the criticism of *œillader* is based on a misunderstanding. In the sixteenth century it was simply a poetic word for *regarder* and did not have the precious connotation which has since been associated with it.

[21] Cf. B. Croce, "Intorno a Guglielmo du Bartas," *La Critica,* XXVII (1929), 307, for a comparison of Du Bartas with medieval preachers.

Que craignez-vous mon prince, hé, ne sçavez-vous pas
Que nous *cinglons* tousjours droit au *port* du trespas,
Où les premiers *anchrez* sont les premiers en gloire,
Que la necessité nous contraint tous de *boire*
En ce *gobeau* broyé par les mains du destin?
Que la mort n'est point peine, ains des peines la fin,
L'*huis* du palais de Dieu, du haut pole *l'eschelle*,
Et le commencement de la vie eternelle? (v. 591-8)[22]

Other metaphors bear the stamp of originality, and they are often vivid and telling, some of them decidedly fine. A particularly good one is found in *Loy* where in a phrase inspired by the use of the sacramental wine to symbolize the blood of Christ, Du Bartas displays real simplicity and sincerity of feeling:

Christ, l'agneau sacre-sainct
Au pressoir de la croix est tellement empreint
Que de son sang divin la riviere profonde
Decoule de Sion par tous les coins du monde.
(v. 791-4)

Another noteworthy example occurs in *Colonies* where the poet is discussing the rise and fall of nations. The metaphor is admirably chosen to illustrate the impermanence of human institutions:

Toutes les nations s'entrepoussent du bras,
L'un peuple chasse l'autre, et le second n'est pas
Sur l'huis de la maison dont il pense estre maistre,
Qu'un troisiesme le fait sauter par la fenestre.
(v. 131-4)

All of these metaphors, whether they be commonplace or strikingly original, have in common a pictorial effect which serves both to ornament and to illustrate the narration. They demonstrate in Du Bartas an active imagination, capable of grasping the analogies between widely separated things, and give evidence of a feeling for the manifold relationships in the universe.

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[22] Cf. also this passage from *Schisme* in which the king's flatterers urge him to defy the wise counsel of the elders:

. . . les mignons, les flatteurs
Crians tous d'un accord, que simple il ne se laisse
Brider si sottement, qu'il presse, qu'il oppresse
Ce peuple, qui refait ne peut vivre en repos,
Que d'une *dent de fer* il lui brise les os,
Pour succer la mouelle, et qu'il tiene contrainte
Sa rebelle fierté dans les *ceps* de la crainte.
(v. 65-70)

B. *Similes*

Like his metaphors, Du Bartas' similes and comparisons are derived from wide and varied spheres of nature and of human activity. He finds them in the observation of animals, birds, and insects (or legends concerning them), in natural phenomena, in the social life and customs of his time, in the events of daily life, in medicine and music and the military art. Again like the metaphors, they represent the close and often subtle relationships which Du Bartas felt to exist between all parts of creation, between man and nature, the physical and the spiritual, God and man.

The similes of Du Bartas resemble those of Homer in conception and treatment. Almost every simile in Homer is a complete picture in itself, and while some of them are very exact in their correspondence with the circumstances of the occasion, many more of them are independent of the thought which inspired the comparison, and the poet goes on to finish the details of the image or the group of images which have been suggested to him by the simile itself. Like those of Homer, the similes of Du Bartas are chiefly pictorial. But whereas in Homer the characteristic of the similes is that they have only one point of correspondence with the action, and that beyond that one point the degrees of resemblance vary infinitely, those of Du Bartas usually have several points of comparison. In this they resemble more closely those of Milton. This is true also of the purpose of the simile, which in Homer is often to provide relief from a scene of strife, pain, or crisis, but which in Du Bartas, and in Milton after him, is chiefly for illustration. Like Homer again, Du Bartas shows partiality for the external world, the world one sees, rather than for the realm of the mind. Furthermore, although there are more points of comparison with the action in the similes of Du Bartas than in those of Homer, Du Bartas, too, is fond of digressions and parenthetical phrases which add to the image rather than to a completion of the comparison. Many of Du Bartas' similes are perfectly balanced with the rest of the passage of which they are a part. Such a simile occurs in the *Second Jour* of the *Première Semaine* where Du Bartas describes the cause of thunder. Warm vapor, he says, rises from the earth and mingles with moisture from the sea and inland waters. When this warm vapor tries to escape from the "voisines froideurs," thunder is heard. He compares this action to a captive lion, and suggests the sound of thunder by a series of well-chosen verbs, linking animate and inanimate nature in a comparison rich with visual and auditive imagery:

Le lyon qui, banni des forests paternelles,
Se void sifflé, moqué, despité des pucelles
Et des enfans oiseux, d'un effroyable bruit
Remplit son parc estroit, va, vient, suit et resuit
La nouvelle prison, et forcené, desire
Non tant sa liberté que d'assouvir son ire:
Tout de mesme ce feu, desireux de briser
Sa flotante cloison, ne se peut apaiser;
Ains sans cesse il discourt, sans cesse il tourbillonne,
Il bourdonne, il fremit, il mugle, il bruit, il tonne,
Jusqu'à ce qu'esclatant ses prisons par dessous,
Armé de flamme et souffre, il canonne sur nous.

Here the balance between the two parts is perfect: both the simile and the action described occupy six verses. *Lyon* corresponds to *ce feu; desire assouvir son ire* is parallel to *desireux de briser; son parc estroit* is the equivalent of *sa flotante cloison;* and the two series of verbs are mutually comparable. The detail *se void sifflé . . . des enfans oiseux* is parenthetical and extraneous to the comparison proper.

In this passage and in most similar passages the transition from the simile to the thing compared is made by a colon (*son ire*:), indicating that the sentence continues and that the thought is carried over. In some cases, however, this punctuation, which is apparently the correct one, has not been observed in late sixteenth-century and early seventeenth-century texts. It would seem that Du Bartas' editors did not always follow his intention to indicate by the punctuation the close relation between the passages.

It is obviously impossible to quote or to describe all of the various kinds of Du Bartas' similes in the space of these few pages, but some idea of their pictorial nature and the various fields from which he drew them can be gained by observing a whole group which occur in his narration of the history of David in *Trophées.* When David and Goliath confront one another before the battle Du Bartas compares them to two cocks, and the Hebrews and Philistines to the lords who surround the cockpit.[23] The approach of the two adversaries is compared to a battle at sea:

Vi-tu jamais comment un galion attaque
Dessus les calmes flots une horrible carraque?
L'une va lentement, et l'autre tourne accort
A prouë, à poupe, à sponde, à babord, à stribord,
L'une se fie au vent, l'autre à la rame nage,
L'une fait plus de peur, l'autre plus de dommage.
(v. 279-84)[24]

[23] This is a description of a scene which Du Bartas had witnessed in Scotland.

[24] David is the *galion,* Goliath the *carraque.*

David shoots and the stone strikes the giant:

> Soudain d'un coup mortel le caillou va marquant
> Le Philistin au front, et s'encharne en la sorte
> Qu'un plom de pistolet s'enfonce en une porte.
> (v. 314-6)

Goliath falls like an undermined tower, and like a mad dog he bites the earth:

> Et comme le mastin qui ne se peut venger,
> Va contre un dur caillou sa rage descharger:
> Goliath mord la terre . . . (v. 341-3)

The narration of the course of David's passion for Bathsheba is likewise embellished with several comparisons. The first of these, in the description of Bathsheba in the bath, is an extremely precious classical allusion:

> Telle qu'un lis qui tombe au creux d'une phiole,
> Telle que Venus, quand lascivement molle
> Elle naist dans la mer, et qu'avecques les thons
> Jà le feu de ses yeux embrase les Tritons.
> (v. 909-12)

On seeing her, David is blinded as a captive emerging from a dark prison is blinded by the light of the sun. His love for her is quickly kindled like "une scintille Qui chiet dans un tonneau de poudre subtile" (v. 950). Later, after his punishment, David is

> Comme l'enfant bien nai, qu'un maistre rigoureux
> Surprend en quelque faute, abaisse l'œil pleureux,
> Blesmit, rougit, tremblotte, et demande, modeste,
> Pardon a son censeur, non de voix, ains de geste.
> (v. 1067-70)

These pictorial similes occur more frequently in the *Seconde Semaine* than in the *Première*. This may be due in part to the fact that much of the former was left in an unfinished and unpolished state at the time of the death of the poet. But certainly the chief reason is the greater freedom which Du Bartas felt in paraphrasing and enlarging upon the history of the Hebrews and the stories of the patriarchs. In his *Première Semaine* he was dealing largely with encyclopedic material, and he was usually contented with a short, apt simile. Furthermore, the variety of subjects itself provided a great deal of pictorial material. But in the *Seconde Semaine*, particularly after the First Day (i.e., *Arche* and the following parts), there was more room and more need for the play of his imagination.

It is apparent from his invocation to the Muses in *Vocation* that he realized this, and that he intended to make the most of his comparative freedom.

C. *Periphrasis*

One of the most frequent devices of which Du Bartas made use to diversify and to ornament his verse is that of periphrasis. This device is, of course, common to all literature and particularly to poetry. It was used extensively by the Latin poets and Du Bartas probably found some of his effects in Virgil. Like many other features of Du Bartas' style which have already been discussed, periphrasis is used to produce pictorial effects by the breaking up of a concept into its component parts, by juxtaposition of ideas, or by combining two or more notions to form new entities.

There is nothing unusual about the formation of Du Bartas' periphrases. The most common method is to use a noun of general sense with an epithet or phrase which makes the meaning specific. The mind of the reader is then forced to combine the two elements. Take for example such nouns as *dieu, peuple, troupeau, bande, plaine, plaisir,* which alone have a general meaning. But when the appropriate epithets are added to them: *dieu porte-lierre, peuple amasse-miel, troupeau porte-laine, bandes emplumées, plaine liquide, plaisir cyprien,* the mind quickly grasps the specific meaning of the phrase: Bacchus, bees, sheep, birds, the sea, love. It is this statement of a thing indirectly by description rather than by its name that makes the phrase more colorful and expressive. For *le peuple amasse-miel* is not merely a decorative equivalent for *abeilles;* it is the bees and something more. *Peuple* suggests the social organization of the hive; *amasse-miel* the gathering of pollen and the storing of honey. These are associations and overtones which make the periphrase richer and more meaningful than the simple phrase. This is the normal function of periphrasis, but it is of primary significance that Du Bartas used it as much as he did It is a device admirably suited to the achievement of pictorial expression and the suggestion of associations beyond the immediate necessities of the text.

Du Bartas is especially fond of periphrases for the sun, the sea, birds, and fish. He calls the fish, among other things, *les moites citoyens de la venteuse mer, les citadins des flots, les bourgeois*

de la plaine liquide. Sometimes the figure of the fish as dwellers of the sea is carried out:

> O citadins des flots, quel partageur borna
> Vostre humide sejour? Quel monarque cerna
> Vostre cité de murs?
> (*P. S.* V, 165-7)

Here *cité* corresponds to *citadins* and the image is complete. But whether or not the metaphor implied in the periphrase is developed in this way, the concept of the social organization of living creatures, as evidenced by the words *citoyen, bourgeois,* etc., is fundamental to Du Bartas.

In the phrase *les bourgeois de la plaine liquide,* one must not, of course, give *bourgeois* its modern restricted meaning. In the sixteenth century it had developed from its original meaning of an inhabitant of a *bourg* to a mere synonym of *habitant.* The latter part of the phrase, *la plaine liquide,* is a common periphrase for the sea and is to be found again in *Phèdre.*[25] This pictorial method of "compression" goes back to Latin poetry (cf. Virgil, *campi liquentes*) and according to Geoffrey Tillotson[26] passes through Joshua Sylvester's translation of Du Bartas to Milton and in general to the poetic diction of the eighteenth century in England. He cites as examples "scaly crew" *(bandes escaillées)* from Sylvester, "finny drove" from Milton (*Comus* 115), and, for *plaine liquide,* Sylvester's "watery camp."

Occasionally the meaning of the periphrase in Du Bartas is dependent upon the context. *Ondes cramoisines* (*Schisme* 265) and *ondes vermeilles* (*Loy* 689) do not convey an immediate, definite picture to the mind unless they are read in their context. Then it is understood that the first means "blood," and the second refers to the Red Sea. In the latter case Du Bartas takes red in its literal meaning and exaggerates it by the use of *vermeille* which gives a more intense impression than merely 'red.' Similarly it is the context that enables one to see the metaphorical use of *escussons ardemment reluisans* for the stars.

Some of the periphrases are purely descriptive without any metaphorical element or reference to associated ideas. The peacock is *l'oiseau tacheté de brillantes rouelles;* Rome is *la ville à sept*

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[25] In the description of the death of Hippolyte:
> Cependant sur le dos de la plaine liquide
> S'élève à gros bouillons une montagne humide.
> (V, 6, 1513)

[26] G. Tillotson, *On the Poetry of Pope,* Oxford, 1938, p. 75.

monts, and the stomach *le creux du ventre plus petit.* Still others show a certain preciosity in the sense of over-refinement and exaggeration of metaphor. *Cuisinier parfait,* for the stomach, would not have been out of place in the Hôtel de Rambouillet. *Rouges couraux* for lips and *tiedes fontaines* for tears recall the petrarchistic imitations of Du Bartas' contemporaries.

It has been mentioned that the greater part of Du Bartas' periphrases are used to indicate things found in nature. This is in keeping with the trend of the Renaissance which had come to be more and more aware of the external, natural world, and which had come to draw increasingly upon visual imagination in expression. A typical example is *le roi des flambeaux* for the sun.[27] By it Du Bartas indicates the relationship between the sun and the other heavenly bodies and its superiority with regard to them, and he suggests a comparison to human institutions, a king and his vassals. Thus by periphrasis he suggests a new order and unity of creation to the human mind.

D. *Play with words*

The listing of words was a characteristic of the humanists of the Renaissance (cf. Rabelais). For them it was a way of displaying their learning and their vast knowledge of Latin and vernacular vocabulary—what Erasmus called *copia verborum.* But it was soon realized that the *copia verborum* had also an artistic use: it could be made to display not only the erudition of the author, but also the immense variety of the exterior world of nature. Thus it became an artistic device for description with abundance of detail and nuance, and it is in this latter tradition that Du Bartas takes his place.

In his description of the plague visited upon the Egyptians it is not enough for Du Bartas to say that it strikes both men and animals. He must make his description graphic by specifying what animals were affected and what kind of sores infested them. Thus he writes:

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[27] A similar periphrase, *le duc des chandelles,* has become traditional in Du Bartas criticism. Du Perron and Sainte-Beuve censure it severely, and Victor Hugo refers to it in *Notre Dame de Paris,* Liv., VII, Ch. 1: "On était aux premiers jours de mars. Le soleil, que Dubartas, ce classique ancêtre de la périphrase, n'avait pas encore nommé le grand-duc des chandelles, n'en était pas moins joyeux pour cela." I have not been able to locate this phrase in Du Bartas, however, and it may be that Du Perron was quoting from memory and that the other critics have followed him.

Le bœuf chet sous le joug, l'agneau meurt en bélant,
En paissant le toreau, le pigeon en volant,
[Dieu] Ores couvre de clous, de pustules, de gales,
Les hommes, les brebis, les taureaux, les cavales.
(*Loy*, 451-4)

In *Colonies* his listing of geographical names serves to show his knowledge and to ornament his verse by giving it a rugged sonority:

La lignée de Cham . . .
Ensemence Syrene, et la coste fumeuse,
Où la Punique mer se desbat escumeuse,
Dara, Gusole, Fez, Argier, Galate, Aden,
Tombut, Melli, Gago, Terminan, et Gogden,
Les deserts bluetans de la triste Lybie,
Cano, Zeczé, Benin, Guber, Borno, Nubie . . .
(v. 345-50)

One of the most striking, although by no means the most frequent type of these word groupings is found in those passages where Du Bartas attempts an onomatopoetic description. The importance of the visual aspects of the external world to Du Bartas has been stressed in connection with his use of metaphor, simile, and periphrasis. Here he tries to give an auditory impression by making the sound of the words correspond to their sense. For instance he imitates the barking of a dog:[28]

D'un branle de poulmon, jappe, siffle, mugit,
Grommelle, hurle-loin, hennit, fremit, rugit.
(*Furies* 235-6)

His most famous passage of this type is the description of the lark:

La gentile alouette avec son tire-lire
Tire l'ire à l'iré, et tire-lirant tire
Vers la voute du ciel, puis son vol vers ce lieu
Vire, et desire dire, adieu Dieu, adieu Dieu.
(*P. S.* V, 615-8)

Here there is more than a simple play with the sounds of words. Underneath them is a play of ideas in the pun *tire-lire, tire l'ire*, and *tire* has still a third meaning in "tire Vers la voute du ciel." This subtlety is not found in any of his similar passages.[29]

[28] Additional examples of onomatopoeia are to be found in Holmes' edition, I, Ch. 6.

[29] This description of the lark has been often imitated. For an adaptation by Le Ville in his *S. Elizabeth*, I, 2, see H. C. Lancaster, *History of French Dramatic Literature of the Seventeenth Century*, III, 427. The 1662 edition of the *Œuvres* of Ambroise Paré refers to Du Bartas in its description of the lark (p. 56).

In connection with this procedure one may mention the reduplication of the first syllable of various words for onomatopoetic effect like *ba-battre* for *battre,* and *flo-flotter* for *flotter.* These words were first used by Ronsard.[30] Du Bartas also formed *bou-bouffer, bou-bouillir, bou-bouillonner, bou-bourdonner, clouclouquant, cracrailler, cra-craqueter, pé-pétiller, sou-souffler,* and *tontonner.*[31] In every case these new formations reinforce the onomatopoetic effect of the simple word, and attempt to suggest sounds or rhythms in sights and feelings which occur in nature: *le cœur ba-bat; une clouclouquante poule; les cracraillantes troupes des corbeaux; le feu pé-pétillant,* etc. These words have been called "silly and meaningless," but they have a very definite meaning for Du Bartas at least, and the effect of silliness that they give may be due to an unconscious identification of them with the language of the nursery in which a child says *fifille, poupoule, mémère, pépère.* The same process has taken place in such words as *murmurare* and *balbutire* in Latin, but the effect of the reduplication has been lost through frequent use over a long period of time.

More frequent, however, and hence more typical of Du Bartas' style, are the hundreds of lines in which related words or sounds are used together for a certain effect. It is true that many of these *rapprochements* strike the modern reader as naïve or amusing, and that Du Bartas seeks effects which are no longer approved in poetry. But it must not be forgotten that the sixteenth century, in spite of the elevated conception of poetry expressed by the Pléiade, still appreciated verbal tricks, and that even the Pléiade did not condemn such obvious *tours de force* as the *anagramme* and the *acrostiche.* For Du Bartas the *équivoque* is not an end in itself, but rather a bringing together of two discrete notions in which the similarity in

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[30] *Babatoit* occurs in the early editions of the *Ode à Michel de l'Hospital* (cf. the Laumonier critical edition of the *Œuvres,* III, 123). This is apparently the reference which Dr. Holmes said that others had mentioned but that he had been unable to find (cf. Holmes, I, 172, note 40). Ronsard changed the word to *haletoit* in later editions of the *Ode* (Marty-Laveaux edition, II, 122). For other examples of these words cf. Huguet and Marty-Laveaux, *La Langue de la Pléiade,* I, 33. Von Wartburg, *FEW,* 639, mentions an example of *flo-flotter* from Etienne Pasquier.

[31] Also *ba-bransler*: "du dauphin la ba-branslante eschine" (*P. S.* V, 485). *Bra-* has apparently been reduced to *ba-* for euphony. This seems more probable than *ba* < *bas.* Cf. Huguet for another example later than Du Bartas.

form or sound of two words is the starting point and the parallel of ideas the development.[32]

The use of a word repeated in both a literal and a figurative sense is one of the artifices which closely resemble those of the rhétoriqueurs. Two or three examples chosen arbitrarily from many will suffice to illustrate it. Referring to the ability of the octopus to protect itself, Du Bartas uses the word *noir* literally to describe the excretion of the octopus and figuratively in a metaphor for death:

> à fin qu'elle puisse avec gloire
> Par l'aide du *flot noir* eviter *l'onde noire.*
> (*P. S.* V, 234)

Similarly in the following passage, *feu* and *puant* describe the fire and brimstone which destroyed Sodom as well as the sin of the Sodomites:

> Feu, tu punis le feu qui brutal les tourmente,
> Et toy, soulfre puant, leur amitié puante.
> (*Vocation* 1145-6)[33]

Du Bartas' use of syllepsis is similar to this, for this trope takes a single word in both its literal and its metaphorical sense. The same word then indicates simultaneously action of both physical and moral nature and suggests a mysterious connection between them. Here it is neither a visual nor an auditive relationship that is expressed, but a relationship brought about by the two meanings of the word itself. This trope, of course, is to be found frequently in both classical and modern literature.[34]

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[32] This use of words of double meaning may be an imitation of the Greek use of puns to suggest a possible esoteric connection between words alike in sound and form.

[33] Cf. also "le ciel Joindrait volontiers ses larmes à leurs larmes" (*Judith* III, 319); "La vertu n'a vertu que quand elle est en peine" (*P. S.* VII, 324); "Le dormir ne fait point dormir ses douces peines" (*Magnificence* 692); "Son cœur reprend cœur" (*Vocation* 576).

[34] Cf. a passage from Racine's *Andromaque* in which Pyrrhus is speaking of his love:

> Je souffre tous les maux que j'ai faits devant Troie;
> Vaincu, chargé de fers, de regrets consumé,
> *Brûlé* de plus de feux que je n'en allumai . . . (I, 4, 318)

Professor Leo Spitzer, *Rom. Stil-u. Literaturstudien,* 202, gives further examples of this trope from Racine, and indicates that they usually represent an antithesis between the spiritual and the physical. These constructions are exceptionally frequent in *Don Quixote* and are characterized by H. Hatzfeld, *Don Quixote als Wortkunstwerk,* as the "Kongruenz des Inkongruenten." Cf. "dadas gracias a Dios y agua a los manos" (II, 18); "señalado no por la mano de Dios, sino por las uñas de un gato" (II, 48), Hatzfeld, pp. 32-3. Still another example is to be found in the verse of André Chénier, *Elégie* XVI:

> Tantôt quand d'un ruisseau suivi dès sa naissance
> La nymphe aux pieds d'argent a sous de longs berceaux,
> Fait *serpenter* ensemble et mes pas et ses eaux . . .

In one passage Du Bartas speaks of

> Le nocher qui, durant sa dangereuse course
> Se laisse plus guider par le gain que par l'Ourse.
> (*P. S.* V, 99)

and, again, of a horse:

> Le courcerot jadis si vif, si gai, si prompt,
> *Abaisse,* extenué, son orgueil et son front.

Du Bartas also uses what is perhaps the most frequent sylleptical expression in the sixteenth century:

> Affin qu'avec le lait elle *suçat* la crainte
> Du tout-puissant Ouvrier.
> (*Judith* IV, 94)[35]

There is another group of *jeux de mots* in which the effect depends upon the use of homophones of different meanings, forming a contrast between sound and sense: "pain non moins sainct que sain" (*Loy* 796); "O Loth, quel lot prens-tu?" (*Vocation* 213); "L'if est sans mouvement, le tremble plus ne tremble" (*ibid.,* 533).

The great majority of Du Bartas' plays on words are less *recherché* than these, however. His most frequent trick is to use in a single phrase a noun, a verb, or an adjective with another part of speech from the same root.[36] This repetition gives a new consciousness of the etymology and thus reinforces the meaning. When we read "Tant d'animaux que sa voix anima" (*P. S.* VI, 427), we are more aware of the original sense of *animal* because of the presence of *animer.* Sometimes in these phrases there is a sort of antithesis: "Le ciel qui borne, non borné" (*P. S.* II, 989). The boundlessness of God is made more real by contrast with the simultaneous realization that He does bound the universe and that He alone is infinite. Similarly "l'innombrable nombre" (*Judith* I, 29) gives a strong impression of great numbers because the concept of number is concomittant with that of infinity.

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[35] Cf. Du Bellay: "les anciens usoient des langues, qu'ils avoient succées avec le laict de la nourrice . . ." *Deffence,* Chamard ed., 155.

[36] This use of cognates was common in Latin, and Du Bartas may have been influenced in this connection by his reading of Latin literature.

In other cases, however, there is neither identity of sound nor an etymological relationship, but merely similarity in sound:

une couronne Qui . . . et flaironne et fleuronne.
(*P. S.* III, 470)

les champs plats de Plate.[37] (*Colonies* 460)

les voleurs volans.[38] (*P. S.* V, 669)

From these examples of various kinds, and from their number, which is naturally far greater than that of the citations given here, it can be seen how consistent was Du Bartas' effort to ornament his verse and to capture the admiration of his readers by these plays on words, these consonances and alliterations. It is probably impossible to convey any exact idea of the extent of that effort, for only by reading a considerable portion of Du Bartas' work can one obtain a just impression of it.

All of these elements, the linguistic innovations, the various stylistic methods through which Du Bartas makes clear his underlying concept of the immensity and at the same time the coherence and unity of the universe, combine to make the *Semaines* unique. Because of the lack of restraint the *Semaines* are more picturesque, the images are more vivid, the expression more personal than the poetry of the seventeenth century when bienséance demanded a comparatively cold and stylized poetics and when exuberance of imagery or spirit was banned. It is true that without the check of formal rules Du Bartas' lack of humor and sense of proportion sometimes led him into excesses. But at the same time, his work is more pleasing to read than many another constructed according to the rules, because of its personal nature.

This study has been called a reinterpretation of Du Bartas. In no sense is this to be construed as a rehabilitation, for he is too far removed from modern taste ever to be read widely with enjoyment. But he can be understood historically, and indeed because of the important literary influence he exerted he should be so understood. It is manifestly an error to criticize him, as he has so often been criticized, for using words which had a different sense in his time than they have today, and it is unfair to criticize him for doing exactly the same thing his contemporaries were doing, and some-

[37] *Plate,* the river Plata.

[38] *Voler,* 'fly'; *voler,* 'steal.' The reference is to birds of prey. *Voler,* 'fly' was originally a term of falconry. From this it came to have the meaning of 'steal' in the sixteenth century, and is so recorded for the first time in R. Estienne, 1549 (*Dict. gén.*). Du Bartas' phrase shows that the origin of the new meaning was still felt. Estienne also has *voleur,* 'thief.'

times doing it with more skill, and for more maturely considered reasons.

For Du Bartas is not at all the well-intentioned bungler that our manuals make him. On the contrary he is a man with a highly interesting linguistic and poetic program, all the more interesting since he is so different from what we have become accustomed to expect from a French poet. His long poem, which seems so discursive because largely narrative, is a carefully considered work with a definite purpose, and whose execution is informed by a fresh and unprejudiced approach to problems of language and style. Better perhaps than any of his contemporaries Du Bartas illustrates the Renaissance desire to make language fit thought rather than to make thought fit language. He is significant in the history of taste as well because his work was for a time a best seller, widely read throughout France, and indeed, all over Europe.

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